

Problem Based Learning in Foreign Language Learner's (FLL) Grammar Class: How Will Students Perceive It?

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Abstract: Grammar is one of the subjects that should be learnt at English Department, but most of them assume that grammar is very difficult. The purposes of this research is to know that Problem Based Learning is the method that can improve student's grammar competence and make sure that Problem Based Learning make students improve their grammar competence. Is Problem Based Learning effective to teach grammar for FLL? To describe this perception this study uses qualitative research with questionnaire and interview. This research is supported by FLL from students of state university in Magelang. The result shows that students of English department as foreign language learner difficult to understand grammar. Some differences come when they use problem based learning. Problem based learning is one of the methods that can help student to overcome grammar problem.

Keywords: Grammar, Problem Based Learning, Foreign Language Learners(FLL)

INTRODUCTION

Learning new language is something challenging for EFL Learners. They have to learn many kinds of skills from other language when they want to master foreign language. One of the important things when they learn foreign language is grammar. It is because every language has different rule or grammar. Some difficulties are faced by EFL Learners in grammar learning process. EFL Learners feel that grammar is difficult, because they should understand the rule of the other language which is unusual. They see that learning grammar should be memorized, so it makes them feel threat with grammar. When they have memorized grammar, they still have difficulties in applying it in written and verbal language (Turkmen & Selami, 2016). This problem cause student often make mistake in their grammar. It is related with (Uibu & Liver, 2015) which stated that the acquisition of grammar itself is related to somebody's cognitive skills. Those problems can be faced with learning process that can make student understand with grammar.

Grammar is crucial in learning process, so teachers should prepare the best method to teach students and make learning process in grammar more interesting. It is in accordance with (Mart, 2013) which stated that understanding grammar is the main key when FLL acquire language knowledge than it makes teaching grammar is an important thing. Method which is used in teaching grammar becomes essential things when grammar is taught. Older traditions of language teaching saw knowledge of grammar or grammar competence as providing the key of successful language use and learning language (Richards, 2015). Conventional method make student boring in grammar learning process. On the other hand grammar rules guide everyone use the language, so they can speak correctly. If students master in grammar they will be good in all language skills. Problem Based Learning (PBL) is one of the teaching methods that students become a centred learning and the teacher as a facilitator. In view of this (Etherington, 2011) said that PBL same with a student- centred method that the students should solve the real problems relate to their materials. In line with this, (Keziah, 2010) said that PBL is an innovative teaching method that make the students solve the learning problems in small group and then, they work individually.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Related theories of Grammar

Grammar has the main role in language teaching. Today the definition of grammar and how grammar should be taught has become a topic as an argument during the history of English language teaching. In traditional education, grammar is one of important things to be learnt. It is accordance with (Richard, 2015) said that older tradition of language teaching saw grammatical competence is one of the key to successful language teaching and language use. There are some rules to make words and sentences in grammar. Learning foreign language and produce it for FLL learners have some factors, such as level of grammar development for FLL learners when they learn foreign language, kind of communication that they use and FLL Learners' L1 like the strategy that they use for communication.

Problem Based Learning as a Method of Teaching Grammar for FLL Learners

Teaching grammar is not an easy thing. Teachers should make sure that the students understand the material that has been taught by them. There are many methods that can be used with teacher for learning process, especially for grammar teaching process. Problem based learning is one of the method that student as a cantered of learning process. It is supported by (Duch, 1995) who state that Problem Based Learning is a learning method which the main characteristic is that real problem as the context for the students learn thinking critical and skill solve a problem and gained knowledge.

Problem Based Learning generally can be knew with this features

1. Problem Based Learning can be started with giving problem first.
2. The problem which is served relate with students' real life
3. Students are divided to some groups
4. Students are given with maximum responsibility when they are forming learning process directly.
5. Students are demanded to demonstrate the product or project that has been done by them.

Students are unwilling to learn grammar because they think that grammar is difficult to be learnt. In fact, some students opine when someone wants to master language, grammar is not needed. The important thing for them is learning conversation. In addition those reasons, grammar is important and one of main element to be learnt.

METHODOLOGY

Design

This research use qualitative process with questionnaire and interview as a design which includes some questions related to teaching grammar by using problem based learning for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learners. This questionnaire consists of 5 (five) questions and the interview consists of 4 (four) questions too. The questionnaire gives 2 options, there are 'Yes' and 'No' as an answer. It is different with the interview that has to be answered with long answer. This questionnaire and interview are purposed to find out student's perspective about grammar and the method to teach grammar which is better than others.

Participants

The participants of this research are fourth semester who take grammar 4 which is about functional grammar. The participants who are involved in this research are in the same university.

The participants are from 19 (nineteen) until 21 (twenty) years old. They had studied English for more than 10 (ten) years. However they have learnt grammar for specific like in the one subject since they join English Department in University of Tidar.

Instruments

This paper uses qualitative approach to get information and data for this research. The reason why does the researcher use qualitative approach is that it can extend the result of the research. The other reason is to increase the range of investigation and expand researchers' skill to gain the conclusions about the problem that is researched. Hence, this paper uses both questionnaires and interview to gain the result of the study. The questionnaires have 5 (five) questions. Those questions in the questionnaires have to be answered with "Yes" or "No". The questionnaires can be accessed with Google form. Researcher shares the link and then the participants click the link next answers the questions. There are the questions for questionnaire.

Table 1: Questions for Questionnaire

No	Questions	Yes/No
1.	Is grammar the most difficult skill to be learnt?	
2.	Do you feel that giving question first before learning grammar makes you understand about grammar?	
3.	Do you agree that problem based learning is more effective way to learn grammar than others?	
4.	Have your teacher use problem based learning when teaching grammar?	
5.	Do you get the differences when you did grammar question first before learning grammar?	

Interview has done by giving question for interviewee with 4 (four) questions. Interview was conducted with 17 students. Every interview spent 5 minutes each participant. This qualitative method was used with the purpose of collecting students' perspective about grammar and the use of problem based learning for teaching grammar. Questions were asked during the interview and the questions are:

Table 2: Questions for interview

No	Questions
1.	How do you learn grammar?
2.	Why do you feel that giving question first before learning grammar makes you understand about grammar?
3.	What are the differences when you did grammar question first before learning grammar?
4.	What are the important things when learning grammar?

Data analysis

Data from questionnaire that has been distributed to the participants are changed to be a form to make researcher easier to process the data. The results from the interview collect to be a data. Qualitative description is used in this research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the questionnaire that has been distribute to the respondent, researcher get this data

Table 3: Findings from questionnaire

No	Questions	Yes	No
1.	Is grammar the most difficult skill to be learnt? (Y/N)	94,1%	5,9%
2.	Do you feel that giving question first before learning grammar makes you understand about grammar? (Y/N)	52,9%	47,1%
3.	Do you get the differences when you did grammar question first before learning grammar? (Y/N)	82,4%	17,6%
4.	Do you agree that problem based learning is more effective way to learn grammar than others? (Y/N)	58,8%	41,2%
5.	Have your teacher use problem based learning when teaching grammar? (Y/N)	64,7%	35,3%

Based on the questionnaire that has been distributed can be concluded that grammar is one of the skills which difficult to be learnt. Problem Based Learning which is one of the methods could help and increased student understands about grammar. More than a half of the participants agreed that Problem Based Learning was easier than other method to learn grammar. The participants got some differences when they learned grammar when problem comes first. Most of teachers who taught students under this study have used Problem Based Learning in teaching grammar.

The way students learn grammar

Most of students in the research have their own way to learn grammar. They tried to match with their need, so they could choose what the best way to learn grammar is. They memorize the formula, do exercise, compare different book that has different tenses, listen teachers' explanation, watch movie, and write the pattern regularly.

“I learn grammar with memorizing and then doing exercise again and again to improve my skill in grammar. I do exercise to test myself, have I understand grammar that I have learned.” (Participant 3)

“I can understand grammar if I know the pattern than analyse the text” (Participant 7)

Students fight to learn grammar and then they test their self to check their comprehension in grammar. They try to use the right way for them, so it makes easy to understand grammar. Every student learns grammar with the different way. It is because every student has their characteristic in learning grammar. Therefore they learn grammar with different method.

The reason PBL makes understand grammar easily

Some participants thought that Problem Based Learning makes them confused. They did not know the material or the formula, but they had to solve the problem. They need explanation from the teacher first, before they do exercise or questions of grammar. Teaching grammar by using Problem Based Learning can be called as build background knowledge to face problem. (Participant 3)

Based on the answer of the participants, Problem based learning method can make grammar easy. By means of compare Problem Based Learning with their way to learn grammar it makes

them think that learning grammar by using Problem Based Learning is easier than others. Problem Based Learning gives the problem first, so it makes them think critically how it can be like that. When students are learning grammar after they get problem they will understand grammar easily. Students will more understand if they do something based on their problem in their real life.

The differences when students did grammar and questions come first before learning grammar

The participants agreed that Problem Based Learning (PBL) can create differences of the result when they learn grammar. Based on the participant's experience, they do exercises before learn grammar. They get some differences when they compare with the other method like teacher centred. One of the participants claims that she gets higher score when they do exercise after they get problem about grammar first. It proves that learning grammar after get problem about grammar make differences, for example in the score. The participants get higher score in the quiz or examination, when the teacher uses Problem Based Learning (PBL) as a method for teaching grammar.

The other participants said that teaching grammar by using Problem Based Learning will spent long time to understand it completely, but they understand grammar well. The other answer is confused about what actually grammar is. That will be different with someone learn grammar first and then face the problems. She thinks that the second one will handle easily.

“I get higher score when my lecture teach grammar by using Problem Based Learning (PBL), it can call differences in learning grammar if the teacher use Problem Based Learning (PBL)” (Participants 1)

Some differences that students get from lerning grammar by using Problem Based Lerning make sure that PBL is more effective for teaching EFL Learners learn grammar. Students perception about PBL makes student interest with PBL as a method for teching grammar.

The important things when learning grammar

Know and understand the formula is the most answers of the participants. By knowing and understanding the formula, they are sure that they can solve grammar problem. The next answer of the participant about the important things when learning grammar are focus, memorize the pattern, practice a lot and continuous learning.

“Focusing on the material and remembering the materials. Because I think all the materials inside grammar subject links each other. For example when you are being taught A, this A material will have a relationship with the B, C, D and so on.” (Participant 7)

Based on those answers from the participants, it can conclude that most of the students use memorizing and practice a lot to master grammar. Memorizing cannot make student understand grammar for a long time without practicing with solving the problem.

According to (Larumbe, 2015) which stated that while someone is researching in L2 and Foreign Language (FL) Acquisition it has close connection with English Foreign Language (EFL) Learners pedagogy. Teaching grammar by using problem based learning will improve all of skills, such as writing, reading, speaking, and listening. One of the ways to increase all of their skills is learning in school. Teacher will teach student with many kinds of method, PBL in

teaching grammar is one of them. PBL is a teaching method that use real problem in student's life to learn how to think critically, get problem solving, and get knowledge or concept about what they are learned. It is supported with (Mulvihill, 2017) said that PBL is the same way with problem centred and learner centred which students are actively involved in facing and solving problems related to what contents and contexts are investigated.

Teaching grammar by using PBL process can be started with the teacher explain grammar learning purposes. The next step is teacher asked students to search two kinds of text that use present tense and past tense. After that, teacher group the students into five groups and give question about verb that is used in present tense and past tense. Teacher let students discussed with their group to talk about the differences of verb that is used in two kinds of texts. Next, all of groups present their discussion results in front of the class. The last is that teacher gives the explanations and corrections about what student have presented before. All of those steps will be active grammar learning process because all of students do what they have to do.

Teaching grammar with PBL makes students do not need memorize the rule of grammar because they have understood it. It is supported with (Nozari & Siamian, 2015) said that learning is not based on memorization. When FLL Learners find the problem automatically they will search the solution why those problem become like that. It will create meaningful learning. When students solve their problems, they will apply their knowledge. It means that learning can be more meaningful and extend when student faced the situation. What students do in grammar learning process by using problem based learning is appropriate with real condition not only a theory, so problems in applying concept or theory will be found during grammar learning process. Teaching grammar by using PBL will also increase critical thinking skill and student's motivation in learning grammar.

CONCLUSION

Teaching Grammar by using PBL is effective for Foreign Language Learners (FLL). It is because problem based learning require the student to find their problem first before they learn language. When student find their problems they will have motivation to solve their problem. Student will try to get the reason or answer how to solve their problem. Something will be very meaningful if it is based on experienced. This statement same with (Zerihun, Beishuizen, & Van Os, 2012) said that one of teaching quality's indicators is student's learning experience. FLL Students will be able to create written and verbal language with the correct grammar because they have understood about grammar from Grammar Learning Process by using PBL.

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